3: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1920 RH1 Caucasia RH1

and 20,000 settlers planted. These improvements had cost £425,000 up to 1914. The water for irrigation was to be obtained chiefly by controlling the rivers Aras and Kura, which in their lower reaches overflow their banks and form permanent marshes. The question of the regulation of all the principal rivers of the country was being officially studied.

(c) *Forestry*

The total area of forest land in Caucasia cannot be stated with certainty. The extent of the forests under the control of the Ministry of Forests was 12,218,000 acres, or about 11 per cent. of the total area of the country and rather more than half of its cultivated area. Kasperowicz [1] puts the total at 16,000,000 acres, and specifies as being favourably situated for commercial exploitation, 1,372,000 acres in Tiflis and Zakatali, 1,008,000 in Elisavetopol, 863,000 in Chernomoria, 807,000 in Kuban, 705,000 in Terek, 647,000 in Batum, 453,000 in Kutais, and 417,000 in Sukhum. The largest tracts of virgin forest are to be found on the mountain slopes of the Black Sea coast; there is a large forest north of Lake Gokcha, and another in the east of Elisavetopol Government; the middle course of the Kura is wooded throughout, and there are considerable forests in the Armenian Highlands. The best exploited forests in Transcaucasia are those in the Ateni valley near Gori, in the Adzhamer valley near Rion, and at Borzhom—all to the west of Tiflis or the east of Kutais.

The trees include walnut, box, beech, oak, birch, Caucasus palm, wych-elm, pine, alder, &c., of which the first five are the most valuable. The walnut and box tree grow extensively in Transcaucasia; their timber formed a valuable article of export, but the quantities exported are declining, since the remaining walnut forests are remote from railways, and the boxwood is being held back to await more favourable

[1] Raffalovich, *Russia: its Trade and Commerce*, p. 94.

3: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1920 RH1 Caucasia RH1

prices. Special varieties of conifers, birch, oak, and palm grow in the Caucasus. The Caucasus palm or *samshita* is not plentiful, but is greatly valued. The commonest tree is the beech, which occupies 25 per cent. of the total forest area; the oak occupies 16·7 per cent. and the pine 8·1 per cent. Plantations of bamboo at Chavka and Sukhum have been very successful, the cane being used for industrial purposes.

The Italian firm of Sbrajavacca was in 1914 exploiting the pine-forests of Svanetia and Ratce, the timber being floated down the river Rion. The firm has saw-mills at Socilava and Poti.

The Russian State levied on all timber a royalty varying according to the kind of wood, &c. The State also fixed the amount of timber to be felled in each area, which was then sold to the highest bidder. The total amount of timber which might be cut in the Caucasus was fixed in 1913 at nearly 220,000,000 cubic feet, of which only a little more than a quarter was actually delivered.

(*d*) *Land Tenure*

The Caucasus as a whole has no fixed system of land tenure, nor are any of the characteristic Russian features of land-holding found there. The various kinds of landowner may be divided into six classes: the old nobility of Georgia; Tatar and Armenian peasant holders; nomad pastoral tribes, who occupy large areas of steppe land, especially in Stavropol Province; Russian settlers, placed on land vacated after the conquest; the Russian State, which owned large areas, mainly forest; and the Imperial family, which had acquired valuable appanages in the Caucasus.

No figures are available to show the proportions in which the land is held by these various owners; and, as a large part of the total productive area is occupied by nomads, no exact statistics would be possible. Moreover, recent events have to a great extent obliterated the old divisions, and new claims to ownership of much valuable land will have to be settled in the course of time.

7:Columbia U. S-4,5 1956 RHl. Caucasia RHl
Armenia RJl

C.
A.
795 the Armenian Church under the Ottoman rule. Its affairs and its relations with the Ottoman authorities, were regulated in the statutory regulations enacted in 1862. The Armenian Apostolic Church retained its autonomy under the head of its Patriarch. And in spiritual matters the allegiance of the Patriarch as well as of his flock to the supreme head of the Church in Echmiadzin was never in question. Thus while only a fraction (no more than a fourth) of the total number of Armenians were the tsar's subjects and therefore under the direct rule of the Catholicos in Echmiadzin, all Armenians owed spiritual allegiance to the See of Echmiadzin. Even the world-shaking events of two world wars and the Russian Revolution has not brought about much change in this respect. And today, even though the supreme head of the Church is shorn of a large number of his perquisites and prerogatives, and in many respects is not much more than a mere shadow of his predecessors, he still has his seat at the historic place and is the elected spiritual head of all Armenians everywhere in communion with the Church.

The Church and Other Religious Institutions in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic

C.
A.
659 All religious institutions in Soviet Armenia, such as churches, mosques, monastic establishments and the like, under the

7:Columbia U. S-4, 5 1956 RH1 Caucasia RH1
Armenia RJ1

C.A. 659

provisions of her Constitution , are free and unhampered in their work of ministering to the spiritual needs of the people. The ambiguous Article 99 of the 1936 Constitution (as amended in 1947) reads: "Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens." While this Article seems innocuous and fair, actually its interpretation has been decidedly detrimental to all religious institutions and establishments. The Constitution provides for the separation of the Church from the State, and also for the separation of schools from the Church. This latter provision has hit the church harder than we of the West can imagine. In a land where the official slogan "religion is the opium of the people" is brazenly publicized, and where anti-religious propaganda has been deliberately and officially encouraged while clerical education as well as the preparation for religious calling has been practically proscribed, one can hardly expect to find much religious freedom. This seems to be the impression of such travellers to Armenia as Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas and Harry Schwartz of the New York Times, whose candid views have been seriously questioned by certain Armenians of New York. Nevertheless, there are in Soviet Armenia at least the semblance of certain religious institutions which, at times covertly, try to minister to the needs of the faithful.

C. A. 793 deputy in Erivan, and the latter in turn has imams under him in communities where Azer-
C. A. 874 baijanis are numerous. Of course there are no medressehs (religious schools), and these communities must depend on the recently re-opened medresseh in Baku for their future spiritual leaders. Thus even the largest and the most numerous minority group in Soviet Armenia probably does not have freedom to attend to its spiritual needs.

C. A. 795 659 The case of the Armenian Church is naturally quite different. As was stated earlier, the Church had been the principal national institutions from the very beginning, and continued as such throughout the checkered history of the Armenian people. It served the people supremely well in dispersion, and in their dire need of spiritual sustenance. Before its authority was undermined and practically shattered by the Soviet regime the Church was a most powerful force in the life of Armenian communities. It has become the beneficiary of considerable wealth, largely through bequests and gifts, and had used that wealth for the education of religious and lay leaders. In this respect the Church was practically the sole organizer and supervisor of the educational system prevailing in Armenian communities. With the advent of the new regime, and the separation of schools from the Church, the whole fabric of the old educational system crumbled. And by confiscating all Church property and thus depriving the

7:Columbia U. S-4,5 1956 RH1 . Caucasia RH1
Armenia RJ1
C:
A:
795
659

Church of nearly all of its source of income, the State placed the clergy at its mercy.

Even under these unprecedented hardships the supreme head of the Church tried to exercise his spiritual authority. He assumed, and the Government did not dispute this assumption, that his spiritual leadership over all Armenian communities in Soviet Armenia, in other parts of the Soviet Union, and in all Armenian communities everywhere was unimpaired. He tried to keep the organization of dioceses intact wherever possible, and of course retained the right to approve the prelates or locum tenens in all dioceses. A tragic change had taken place under the Ottoman Empire. Instead of the large Armenian communities numbering close to 2,000,000 before the first World War, they numbered only 50,000. Still the Holy Father sitting in Echmiadzin must have been consoled by the fact that new and large Armenian communities were established in other countries, and in other parts of the Western hemisphere, even though some three-fourths of all Armenians (that is, more than 2,000,000) were still in the Soviet Union.

For more than three decades the supreme head of the Church must have lived in "captivity." During all that time there were no schools for the training of the clergy and there was an acute shortage of priests and bishops. Many dioceses in various parts of Soviet Armenia, as well as in nearby Azerbaijan and

C.
A.
795
659 Georgia (where there are large Armenian communities), were without religious leadership for many years. Since the early 1950's, however, there have been certain changes. It seems that there has been some relaxation on the part of the Government in respect to religious affairs. It has allowed the opening of a seminary in Echmiadzin where studies for the priesthood are pursured, apparently without hindrance, and probably with some aid from the Government. Last October a new Catholicos was elected, and on that occasion a number of Armenians from abroad were allowed to visit Soviet Armenia. The general impression of these observers from the West seems to be somewhat favorable, though they admit that the Government still does not allow the erection of new churches, nor permit the repair of old ones. One exception seems to have been made. The historic cathedral of Echmiadzin is reported to have been repaired recently at Government cost. Still this does not mean that the policy of the Government has changed radically towards religion and towards the Church.

C.
A.
771 Armenians have always been profoundly religious. They have associated the Church so closely with the nation that without the one they can hardly think of the other. For them, as well as for most peoples of the Middle East, religious affinities run parallel to ethnic similarities. Not many Armenians think of their religion without thinking of their nationality. That perhaps is the reason why the supreme head of

7:Columbia U. S-4, 5 1956 RH1 Caucasia
Georgia RI/ RH1

E. 779 the life of St. Shushanik († 474). The Georgian text of the gospels as it is used until today in divine worship goes back to a revision after the Greek by the Hagiorite Euthymius († 1028); a copy of an older text shows that the Georgian gospels originally were translated from Armenian and afterwards were revised according to the Greek.

E. G. 795 659 The Georgian Orthodox church, which always represented the influence of Byzance and of the West as opposed to that of Persia and the East, has not known serious conflicts with the State, due to the continuous menace of Islam to both. The autocephaly of the Georgian Church was violated by the Russians in 1810, the office of Katholikos being abolished. It was restored in 1917; since then, the fate of the Georgian church has been the same as that of other religious organizations in the USSR.